

Early History of Georgia in Verse

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The Preface—Robert Castell

An English gentleman, to affluence born,
Of high attainments, polished and refined,
By England made, her nation to adorn,
By England nurtured when her laws were kind;—
Amid romantic scenes that artists make
Was made an artist, honored by the best;
With natural gifts that halls of learning take
Was made an architect, by each hard test.

An author, too, he was; his famous book,
"The Villas of the Ancients," still can claim,—
If we upon its pages now could look,—
Of no uncommon merit was his fame,
Debts were incurred, unable to be paid—
That was a crime not easily forgiven!
Poor Robert was arrested—none gave aid—
And all seemed lost for which his life had striven.

A "Sparging House" received him first—for pay;
His scanty means exhausted, income gone,
In that poor home he could no longer stay,
And he must leave, but where it was unknown.
"I know the place for you," the jailer said,
"Pack up your things and quickly come with me;
I'll take you where no duns you'll ever dread,—
The ward where small pox rages now is free!"

Beyond the doors he heard their groans dismayed,
Their bloated forms perceived, the dreadful scent;
"Take me not there," he begged, "I am afraid;
Send me to jail and I will be content."
Within that ward, with loathsome poisons rife,
Where sick men died with none to help or care,
Or lived disfigured, marred from happy life.
The heartless jailer left him trembling there.

That artist, author, architect renowned,
For honors made, all mercy was denied;
Disgrace and death within a prison found,
And for no crime within a prison died.
He pointed to that jailer even in death,
With swollen hands' last feeble, fluttering stir,
And with his last expiring, gasping breath,
Accusing cried, "You are—my murderer!"

Uncured may seem the suffering and distress,
But prayers by prisoners made are heard in Heaven;
What man or angel could such deeds redress?—
James Edward Oglethorpe, the answer given!
For Castell had a friend, both good and great,
Then fighting far away with Prince Eugene,
And he returned, unconscious of his fate,
Not knowing what such cruel prisons mean.

At rest from wars, from martial cares set free,
"Where's Robert Castell?" he questioned.—Incomplete
Seemed home and dear ones he was wont to see
Without that gentle soul, so kind and sweet.
"His fate have you not heard?—or but forget?"
Answered his friend, "That character refined,
Has been arrested,—lies in jail for debt;
Committed there by English laws unkind."

Away in haste to set the prisoner free—
He had the means that never men refuse!—
"My friend Castell," he said, "I wish to see."
"Your friend is dead and buried," was the news.
When saddened Oglethorpe now turned away,
The prison wretches crowded to his side,
And some in whispers, some in bolder key,
They told him how his friend had died.

To Parliament with eloquence profound,
He pleaded that these miseries might abate;
His reasonings were so just, they knew, and sound,
Men were appointed to investigate.
And with them Oglethorpe was sent to aid,
If those foul charges could be false or true;
But what they found was worse than charges made,
And worse than human beings dare to do.

Dirt and diseases there went hand in hand,
With fifty men in rooms sixteen feet square;
The jailer ruled supreme—in sole command—
And strong men died for want of breathing air.
No food was there for those poor souls bereaved;
The rich forgot them in their careless pride;
One half the gifts sent there were not received,
The money given was to them denied.

The sick on pallets lay upon the floor;
On scaffolds, tiers of others groaned above;
And higher up in hammocks swung still more,
With none to pity, no one left to love.
And oft the dead was to the living chained—
For there in winter some one died each day;—
What hopes had such poor suffering souls retained?—
In spring and summer twenty passed away.

Sir William Rich, an English gentleman,
They found with chains about his feet;
They said, "Release him quickly as you can,
Never again such punishments repeat."
But three days later when the men returned,
They found Sir William still chained fast;
Their orders by that jailer had been spurned—
And into prison he himself was cast.

The Medes and Persians no unjust deeds uphold—
And England would not have her laws repealed;
But sympathizing friends poured forth their gold,

And to the wise a way was soon revealed.
At last the debtors' claims were satisfied,
Wild lands were freely given across the sea,
Where broken men in safety might abide,
And with the Indian tribes again be free.

In England now none die for debts in prison?—
Whose only fault was surety for a friend!
A savior for such needs has long since risen,
Though failing fortunes may refuse to mend.
But once those helpless creatures there did sigh,—
Just laws were not for them, but unjust woes;
Their only fate to suffer and to die,
Forgotten by the world, by friends and foes.

When Castell in a debtors' prison died,
When ceased the throbbing of his gentle heart,
His passing soul the gates flung open wide,
And paved the way that others might depart.
To miseries untold he brought relief,
A host of sufferers his death set free;
For Robert Castell's life, so sad and brief,
The Preface was to Georgia's history!
Aug. 3, 1932.

Sailing for Georgia

What means at Milton on the Thames that crowd?
A hundred strangers pass along the street,
While church bells in the autumn air ring loud;
They never stop with friends or foes to meet.
Men, women, children, families and friends,
A living stream along the pavement flows;
They pause not till at church the journey ends,
And each into the sacred building goes.

Perhaps they prayed, perhaps they sang in tears;
On English soil 'twas their last Sabbath day!
Their burdened hearts were full of anxious fears;
No one could tell what fate before them lay.
But in that church a message came divine,
And fell upon their troubled hearts like dew;
Within that church a Presence seemed to shine,
And o'er each soul a sunny mantle threw.

After that sacred hour came rest and peace,
Their hearts for high adventure beating strong;
Their souls from heavy cares finding release,
Soared jubilant with hope and thankful song.
Forth from that church the congregation fared,
A misty radiance o'er their faces shone;—
Such is the halo that an angel wears
When heavy burdens and life's cares are gone.

And now at Depthford waits the galley Anne,
The passengers all ready to embark;—
There goes a happy merchant, spick and span;
A carpenter resolved to make his mark;
The sturdy masons, strong to bear the hod;
The happy farmers walking straight in line,
All ready now to turn the waiting sod,
And on the new world plough their furrows fine.

No felons there, no criminals—detected,—
But men who reputations fine have borne;
The very fact that they have been selected
Was like a badge of honor proudly worn;
They lifted high their heads with conscious pride,
Resolved again to conquer adverse fate;
And, unafraid, gazed on the world, clear-eyed,—
These honest men who went to found a state.

Their faces to repression long inured,
And suffering, wore a look of secret joy;
No laughter loud unseemly mirth assured,
But quiet peace which nothing could destroy.
Oh! could we backward turn those folded leaves,
And hidden pages of their lives now read,
We'd find no failures over which one grieves,
But men who'd been too honest to succeed.

But who are these to Gravesend riding down,
With coach-and-four, and trappings of the great?
Distinguished men are they of high renown,
On errands of humanity and state.
Tomorrow sails away the good ship Anne;
Trustees responsible for each one's need,
Have come with Oglethorpe to view their plan,
To bid farewell to him, and say goodspeed.

Who is the man that towers over all,
Authority and power in his mien?
Of giant height,—five feet, nine inches tall,—
Surveying all with piercing eye-sight keen?
To know him not one must be more than blind;
'Tis he who from the prisons set them free;
'Tis Oglethorpe, the great, the just, the kind,
Who with them goes to found the colony.

The last farewell is waved with fluttering hand;
The happy ship sails proudly from the shore;
Now fade the faces, fades the town,—the land,—
And England fades that some shall see no more.
Perhaps they wept, perhaps they smiled through tears;
The mother hushed the babe upon her breast;
That parting view must linger through the years,—
And then tired eyes and hearts had rest.

The free winds carol in their ears a song;
The prison pallor from each face is freed;
Two little souls its kiss had waited long,—

For them it came too late for earthly need.
The little Cannon child in stupor slept,
Pale death upon his face had set its mark;
Upon the deck with feeble steps scarce crept
The ailing little son of Robert Clarke.

"This is a pretty prison," lisped a child,
"Here everybody is so kind and sweet;
Things are so clean, the wind blows cool and wild,—
And Oh!—we always have enough to eat!"
The mother smiled upon her little band;
"We now are free," she said; "this is no prison."
The joyous child then seemed to understand,
And quickly asked, "Oh! Mother!—Is it Heaven?"

The days go drifting by like happy dreams;
Health giving winds and radiant suns assist;
And then Madeira on their vision gleams,
An emerald gem on Neptune's up-flung wrist.
All hands grow busy in a fervor fine;
Sweet is the land after the watery trail;—
On board they take five tons of sparkling wine;
The pleasant visit ends;—again they sail.

Upon the deck a group of mourners stand,
The Rev. Dr. Herbert softly read
The funeral service to that sorrowing band,—
For Richard Cannon's little son was dead!
Two hundred years beneath the waves he sleeps,—
He could not go their love and toil to share;
Two hundred years beneath the waves he keeps
The loving memories buried with him there.

Upon that ship in daily, sweet communion,
Friendships are made that only death can sever;
And if 'tis true—this power of friends in union—
No earthly care can bring despair forever.
Soon comes another burial at sea,
And for awhile their pilgrimage makes dark;
They knew long life for him was not to be,—
This ailing little son of Robert Clarke.

In these dark days a new affection clings
'Round that strong figure travelling with them there;
For Oglethorpe in priceless wisdom brings
Some magic gift with each tired soul to share;
The sick some tempting food he sends to cheer;
The scholar, in his wisdom finds delight;
His gentle wit enchants the listening ear;
In pious discourse leads, when it is right.

Oh! pleasant was that voyage, 'though 'twas long;
For their tired lives it was a heavenly boon;
With wholesome food to make their bodies strong,
With peace to lead them back to childhood's June.

The realms of boundless space absorb their cares,
Into immensity their troubles flee;
Balm to each aching heart a happy angel bears;
All gnawing cares depart and leave them free.

A pleasant voyage, though the time was long;
Good health attends them on their final quest;
Upsoar their hearts each day in thankful song;
The worst of life is past, now comes the best.
A misty line upon the sky appears,
That beckons to them like a friendly hand;
It comes to meet them as the good ship nears,
And all perceive 'tis land!—'tis land!

Upon the deck they kneel in thanks devout—
'Tis Oglethorpe's request—the preacher prays;
The waiting land sends forth a welcome shout;
This happy moment for the past repays.
Into the bay the vessel proudly sails;
Down drops the anchor in the waters deep;
They have been led by One that never fails;
This is the end—the voyage is complete!
Jan. 13, 1733.

Savannah

Chap. III

For miles a beach of snowy sand extends,
Wide spreading water-oaks stretch sheltering arms,
In rows beyond stand lofty pines, like friends;
Hushed any sound to fright or cause alarms.
If wild eyes watch in ambuscade unseen,
If hid from view the lurking red men roam,
All Nature seems at rest, the heavens serene,
And quiet welcomes here the wanderers home.

How slowly moves the work; no haste is made.
Their precious cargo to unload requires ten days;
Foundations for the city homes are laid;
They build, and on the future fix their gaze.
From England came Savannah's matchless plan,
Brought in a box to Georgia's foreign shore;
Whose was the master-mind, who was the man,
That traced the lines of its designs of yore?

Derricks are made, and slowly they unload
The needed freight—utensils, bedding, food;
Men clear the ground of weeds for their abode;
Erect with slanting sides their shelters rude;
While Oglethorpe and Colonel Bull with care
A city for succeeding years began;
Of spacious streets, of pleasant parks, the square,—
And centuries have never changed that plan.

The axes ring, the tree-tops falling, crash;
The flying birds depart and shrilly cry;
The children clean the premises of trash,
The women help to pile the bonfires high.
But near are left four pines of lofty height,
A tent beneath, above the wild birds perch;
The lonely home of Oglethorpe at night;
There court is held,—on Sunday 'tis a church.

In May a public dinner is prepared;
For why should they not rest and make a feast?—
Let happiness and wholesome food be shared,
Their arduous labor for awhile has ceased.
There stands a row of houses neatly made,
Wide streets run through and part the forest trees,
Neat gardens grow in tender green arrayed;
But best of all good health the people please.

The Indian guests row in from every stream;
Two hundred miles some walk o'er hills and vales,
With painted skin fantastic as a dream;
A feathered head-dress down the shoulder trails.
The chiefs and warriors, fifty-six in all,
In buckskin shirts and sandals neatly clad,—
The finest of their nation, six feet tall—
Visit the truest friends they ever had.

The race that watched DeSoto come and go,
That saw DeAyllon's scattered ships depart,
Melendez' cruelties, and Jean Ribault,
Unmoved, perhaps, gazed on each feeble start.
Within the Cherokees' proud, dauntless air,
Still walked the spirit of lost Englishmen;
That maiden fair, long-lost, Virginia Dare,
Her beauty stamped on maidens of the glen.

Such curious beings came and went away,
From whence and whither none could ever know;
A silent audience watched their little play—
No difference it made if friend or foe.
And when the red men wearied of this scene,
These actors, too, might leave and be no more;
Their secrets hid beneath the forests green,
While soft winds whispered on the lonely shore.

Unsolved the mysteries of Croatan!
Did some one come with manners sweet and mild?
Was it a country, city, or man
Speaking the language of a little child?

They crossed the mountain-trails that ne'er return,—
Let soft winds sob along the lonely shore!
Upon some western plain their watch-fires burn;
And, "Lost," the wild winds shriek, "forevermore!"

And must Savannah share that common fate?
Must it, too, cease when Indians cry, "Enough!"
Or would it linger where the ages wait,
Still proudly sitting on that lofty bluff?
Wise Oglethorpe, her destiny make sure;
Eternal, write the treaty here begun;
In war or peace, her glory must endure,
While shines the sun and Georgia's rivers run.

Savannah

The ship waits on the bar of Charleston bay,
While Oglethorpe to meet the Governor goes;
The Council greets him in his transient stay,
And help upon the Colonists bestows.
The pilot of the King is kindly sent
And to Port Royal safely leads the ship;
Upon an island they erect both huts and tent,
That they may rest after their ocean trip.

How happy was the freedom of the land!
The children unrestrained play in delight;
The flashing bonfires make the cool night bland,
When pine and cedar boughs burn warm and bright.
Wild birds fly singing to the lofty trees,
Or from the thickets trill a welcome song;
The early flowers scent the ocean breeze,—
This happy picnic lasts the whole week long!

There Oglethorpe leaves them in wisdom kind,
And far away on Georgia's soil seeks well
A permanent location, good and fair, to find
Where they in homes may peaceful be and dwell.
The pleasant week is ended, now they go
To Beaufort where they wait the ship's return;
Good news soon sets their happy hearts aglow,—
Soon Oglethorpe will come to them, they learn.

Back to that waiting band he brings release;
They see him come with faces flushed and bright
If ought their happiness could now increase,
A greater celebration brings delight.
Thanksgiving Day by him was then proclaimed,
Their first in public on that foreign soil;
Perhaps each one, ere this, his blessing named
And half forgot in thanks life's past turmoil.

Their chaplain Oglethorpe to Beaufort sends,
That they may hear his learned, dulcet tones;
While comes to them and their new-made friends
And pleased them well, the Reverend Lewis Jones.
Within the New World thus there comes to all
Who walk alone the paths of righteousness,
That Voice whose accents ever sweetly fall,
That Friend whose presence only one can bless.

The feast that followed in the bracing air,
Where mirth and pleasant moderation wait,
Was made—each had enough and more to spare,
And to excess none drank, or ate too much.
For them and for their new-made friends, so brief,
A feast is made where all may freely dine;
On turkey, pork, fat fowls, and English beef,
Hogsheads of beer, and generous gifts of wine.

They wait refreshed, for pleasant was their stay,
And Carolina people had been kind;
Upon that Georgia shore now still so far away,
What greater gifts could they expect to find?
“The boats have come,” they say, “to take them home!”
Soon they embark and slowly move away,
They round the headlands, riding o’er the foam—
They pass from sight at morn into a happy day.

At last a river flowing meets the watchful eye,
A few more watery miles,—they’ll cease to roam;
The Anne a welcome waves as they pass by—
Upon the Georgia shore they stand—at home!
The sun descending warns them now to haste;
Food from the ship and bedding were conveyed;
Each found a task and had no time to waste,
The axes ring, and arbors soon are made.

The smell of cooking food, the bracing air,
The pleasant exercise, surroundings new,
Appreciation gave to simple fare.
When work was done, and busy moments flew.
Watchfires were lighted, sentinels were placed,
The wearied colonists to rest retired;
With hopeful hearts for dangers to be faced,
Their souls with high enthusiasm fired.

But tireless Oglethorpe a vigil keeps,
Let quiet night bring rest to other men;
Around him peacefully all Nature sleeps;
What were the thoughts that crowded round him then?
He who had bravely fought in distant war,
Who many cares and dangerous battles known
Now he who faithfully had led them far,
Out—watched the faithful stars of night alone.

He knew that where the night-birds sadly call,
Church bells would ring and men would sing and pray;

That where the sentinel's lone footsteps fall,
A million more would walk and pass some day.
Rest, wearied travelers, till the glorious dawn;
Peace, Sentinels, and guard, while others sleep;
On that still night another state was born,
And God the guardians of her youth would keep!
Feb. 12, 1733.

Oglethorpe and the Salzburger

A hardy race of Austrians plied their trade
And worshiped God in simple, honest toil;
Clocks for the old and pretty toys they made,
Vine-dressers, gardeners, they tilled the soil.
Among the Alpine vales, these Tyrolese,
These Austrian Protestants, at dead of night,
In dire oppression left their homes of ease
And walked through Europe in their helpless plight.

They marched by thousands in a wandering band;
They had no food, no extra clothes to wear;
Exiled from home and from their native land,
The rich and great were proud with them to share.
Nine hundred with the Count of Stohlberg dined;
Within his palace all found food and rest;
Then on again they went, seeking to find
A final home with peace and safety blest.

The Leipzig clergy met them at the gate,
Ere they within the city's precincts trod;
They entered town together, low and great,
Singing, "A-Mighty-Fortress—Is-Our-God."
All Wurtemberg came forth as if to greet
Expected friends returned from happy quests;
Though poor, and walking by on wearied feet,
It was an honor to receive such guests.

At Frankfort-on-the-Main in wagons sought
A hundred Salzburger for exiles' alms;
Their Bibles, children, wives with them they brought,
And as they journeyed sang sweet hymns and psalms.
They floated down the waters of the Rhine;
At Rotterdam embarked for England's shore;
The Trustees welcomed them as Christians fine,
And offered homes where they should leave no more.

In London thirty thousand pounds were raised
To help them and their passing needs relieve;
This bounty seven thousand exiles praised—
Ten thousand more the passing years bereave.
Across the ocean lay a fertile land
In urgent need of honest men like these;
Perhaps they came impelled by God's command,
Led by the Shepherd who the future sees.

To Georgia's shore, a land of hope and cheer,
 In Von Reck's care a hundred settlers sailed;
 With Bolzius and Gronau,—their pastors dear,—
 This daring venture faltered not, nor failed.
 Upon that voyage, normal lives were led;
 The men carved toys to please some little child;
 The morning and the evening prayers were said;
 The women, knitting, tedious hours beguiled.

Tempestuous winds brought storms, 'though it was spring;
 Sweet prayers fell when day to twilight dims;
 But when on Sunday all the people sing,
 Winds held their breath, listening to Luther's hymns.
 Ten leagues from Carolina's longed-for shore,
 From ocean's depths some soil and sand they dip;
 This sentimental act assurance bore
 How soon to land would sail their faithful ship.

Kind Oglethorpe at Charleston saw them land,
 And brought fresh food these emigrants to aid;—
 Fresh vegetables for that sea-tired band,
 Within his gardens at Savannah made.
 He introduced these humble to the great;
 No courtesy or honor left undone;
 Upon these lowly emigrants await
 Two governors—and their affections won!

Two days and then Savannah sails in view,—
 To them it was the time of evening prayer;
 Their dearest wish at last to them comes true;
 Their Georgia hailed them with a welcome rare.
 The people met them with ringing shout,
 The friendly Indians, too, their hands extend;
 That God Himself had led them, who can doubt?—
 And here, at last, their troubles seem to end.

As visitors they feast and gaily jest,
 Their wanderings tell, effacing hints of gloom;
 At night securely then the wearied rest,
 And wake refreshed, new duties to assume.
 In early morn they row six miles up stream,
 Led o'er the land, for homes to seek at will;
 Among the hills and vales, fair as a dream,
 They chose the plats which their requirements fill.

Beside a stream, by the good Governor led,
 All kneel in prayer, and thanks devout are made;
 Then work began, all hands assist; 'tis said
 The Indians help; all work is free, unpaid.
 They first rude homes of wooden tents devise
 Where pine trees bloom and scent the balmy air;
 Then strong, neat homes, like magic, seem to rise,
 And soon the forest smiles with gardens fair.

Poor Lackner died, the first to leave that band;
 His heritage they saved to give the poor;
 Just and devout they ruled within the land,
 And to this day their deeds and names endure.

The church they built Jerusalem they called;
From it an avenue of cedar trees
Leads to the cemetery, gloom enthralled,
Where sleep and rest these ancient Tyrolese.

Within each war that Georgia has endured,
These Salzburgers have bravely fought and died;
Their thrift and labor competence assured
To every neighborhood where they reside.
In Florida, the Eichelbergers' realm;
In California rove the Helvenstein;
Still Georgia claims the blood of Mack and Helm,—
Descendants of the race that left the Rhine.

The Keiffers and LeContes who can forget?
The Schumperts' works who living does not know?
And in our midst still dwell and labor yet
Those valiant races,—Kaiglers and Prothro.
The Bollingers, the Grubers, Rents and Mohr
Have labored with us leaving records fine;
The Kimbergs keep the honors earned of yore,—
The Branders, Bucklers, Ortman and McKay.

A land of model homes their labor made,
In all professions wisdom gave them part,
As preachers, teachers, lawyers, men of trade,—
These Zittreurs, Ernsts, Schusle and Layshart.
The Schneiders, Burgmers, Paulers, Kitchens live,
The Rottenberg, Riddlesporge and Meyer;
All like the Leitners had true worth to give,—
The Gugues, Tarringers, Roels and Goldwire.
March 17, 1734.

Oglethorpe and the Indians

Beside the broad Savannah lived a chief,
Brave Tomochichi of the Yamacraws;
Aged ninety years, but strong beyond belief,
For nurtured he had been by Nature's laws.
His wife Scenaukay and his brother's son,
Tooanahowi dear, with him lived still;
By Indian helpers was his labor done;
His bees hummed near, his cattle roamed at will.

Above him was a town of Indian friends;
Below, the Musgroves kept a trading post;
Far, far away their land with game extends.
And all the needs of life his country boasts.
But once to Governor Glen they had complained—
Trespassers on their soil must be reprov'd;
John Jones and William Whitehead were restrained
And from the Indian hunting grounds removed.

Serene he sits and dreams of other days
When lithe and young he roamed with Muskhogeegs;
Or, like a panther, stalked his game—such plays—
With Isty Seminoles and Hichitees.
But he was weary of the white man's rum,
Of lying tongues and traders' keen deceit;
Oh! if an honest man to him would come,—
Or did the white man only know to cheat?

“What is that vessel strange sailing up-stream?—
Tooanahowi, look!—your eyes are keen;
Have I grown old and waking watch a dream?—
Not here, but oft at Charleston such I've seen.
Who is the man on deck that proudly stands
With piercing eyesight scanning all the shore?”
“He is the one who men and ship commands
And wakens hope that strong men come once more.”

“I will not rush to meet them, let them go;
Why should I care if they depart or stay?
To me they come, if they wish ought to know;
In my own land I am as good as they.”
Ah! Tomochichi, one has come to thee,
Wearing the toga all have claimed to wear;
Bringing the ships that set the prisoners free,
Bearing the gifts of peace with all to share.

They met,—two chiefs—beneath a spreading oak;
Though not alone, with them were many others;
But when these fearless leaders met and spoke
They knew, though red and white, that they were brothers.
From Carolina courtly William Bull,
With Jonathan Bryant and a curious crew;
With Tomochichi's friends the woods were full;
The Musgroves were interpreters, then true.

Permission by the Indian chief was given;
He also helped to choose a spacious site;
When down the stream the stately ship was driven
Something seemed lost that made the day so bright.
To find one true, he had lived long enough;
Would he return, this strange new friend so clever?
Would homes be built upon the vacant bluff?
Or had he vanished like a dream forever?

He saw them come, the strange, new town begin;
Their actions watched with keen, appraising eyes;
So just was one all hearts he seemed to win,
And found by no man's code ought to despise.
A message reached the tribes two thousand strong,
Their presence by the white man was required;
Braves were appointed for that journey long,
To meet in conclave as their friends desired.

When they assembled on Savannah's banks,
The Governor was absent whom they sought;
To Carolina he had gone with thanks
For many gifts and help that had been brought.

But faithfully they waited his return;
With courtesy by him they were received;
They came with joy, they said, his laws to learn,
And all the good they heard of him believed.

"We come in friendship," Oglethorpe explained;
"We would not trouble you and not annoy;
We wish that land from you could be obtained,
And treaties made that nothing could destroy."
Onechachumpa, giant chief, replied;
"Your words are wise and to them we give heed;
For good, your God has sent you to our side;
We'll give you all the land we do not need."

There was no talk of sale or price; instead
The Indians made their offerings like a prince.
"Between two rivers take the land," they said;
And Oglethorpe received a fair province.
The broad Savannah was the western line,
The Altamaha wide restrained the other;
Who else e'er made a priceless gift so fine,
Like these red men to one called friend and brother?

Then to the chiefs appropriate gifts were sought;
Those called beloved men the same received;
Attendants, too, remembered, none were bought,
Then all departed, each with hopes achieved.
A war-dance followed; Oglethorpe attended;
Commemorating peace a feast was made;
Through many years no horrid deeds offended;
In peace or wars the Indian furnished aid.

Death of Tomochichi—October 5, 1739

Old Tomochichi's years were ninety-seven;
His span of life its course had nearly run;
Though he find happy hunting grounds of Heaven,
There yet remained in life one task undone.
Great Oglethorpe so oft from him was gone,
Across the seas sent on some useless quest,
The white man's faults so well to him were known,
He was convinced the Indians' ways were best.

God made him but an Indian, proud and brave,
Not like the race beyond the boundless sea;
The white men's gifts to Indian friends he gave
And gladly lived in wilful poverty.
God gave the white man wisdom, Indians land,
To be like others, 'twas in vain to try;
He was an Indian of a roving band,—
As God had made him he would live and die.

While living in Savannah, still at peace,
To Oglethorpe his faithful friend was lost;
The best and longest life on earth must cease,—
And mortals pay at last life's total cost.
Within his tent old Tomochichi lay,
His faithful wife, Scenaukay, by him stood;
Tooanahowi, constant as the day,—
He wanted with him Oglethorpe, the good.

If the great general came, he could get well,
So oft he'd been to comfort and to cheer,
His strong hands like a benediction fell,
The fever seemed to leave when he was near.—
Good Oglethorpe was in the tent again,
With his own hands he bathed the feeble chief,
Gave medicines to dull the gnawing pain,
But knew that death alone could bring relief.

"How glad I am that you have come," was said,
"The treaty you have kept, O faithful friend.
One more request I ask. When I am dead
Still near you let me rest till earth shall end.
And in your town, Savannah, bury me;
In earth I gave to you, there let me sleep;
And when my grave your pale faced brothers see,
Let them the treaty, too, with me keep."

Within his tent lay Tomochichi dead,
Saw not the shining of October's sun;
Heard not the mourners wailing—he had fled—
Saw not his friend,—for all of life was done.
And in Savannah true to his desire,
Was Tomochichi by his friends interred;
And at his funeral the red man's choir
And white men's military pomp were heard.

The pall bearers were Oglethorpe and four
Named Stephens, Lemon, Maxwell, Carteret;
The Indian mourners followed—half a score—
They paid to him with honors life's last debt.
Good Oglethorpe and others, gently bear
The lifeless chief, by Indian mourners wept;
His grave was made upon the open square,
And there two hundred years the chief has slept.

They covered with a heap of stones his grave,
But time removed these markers, all are gone;
And now where sleeps in peace this Indian brave
Is lost, like Israel's prophets, and unknown.
Rest, Tomochichi, in undying fame!
For what you did we will remember you,
The gift you made when Oglethorpe first came,
The treaty kept, and for your virtues true.

Old Tomochichi, wild, uncivilized,
In honor with the noblest white man rates;
And Oglethorpe, whom great men recognized,
Himself possessed the red man's noblest traits.

Each noble soul was worthy of the other;
The death of either had the other grieved;
Though red and white, they called each other brother,
And neither in the other was deceived.

Old Time their reputations could not cheat;
Their names are linked in chains of purest gold;
When we the name of either would repeat
With honor, too, the other must be told.
Though one in England rests in honored sleep,
And one unknown upon his native shore,
The world their memories alive will keep,
And Georgia honor them forevermore.

The Indians' Visit to England

A council of the red men had been called,
And Oglethorpe himself was there.
So often cruel deeds the whites appalled
He sought this peaceful colony to spare.
In far off England plans had been devised
In closer bonds the races to unite;
The wise men of the realm rightly surmised
'Twas best to show them England's power and might.

"I've been to see you in your homes and tents,"
Said Oglethorpe, "Now go with me to mine;
The King an invitation, too, has sent—
His wish to us is like a word divine."
"We thank you and the king. We wish to go,"
The Indians said, "and we will answer soon;
Each tribe we must consult, then let you know.
We will return within another moon."

The Alderborough waits the gathering crowd;
From far and near a curious throng attends;
The time was April, sweet with winds and cloud,
All nature to the scene enchantment lends.
Attendants and interpreters were there,
But Tomochichi and his wife led all;
Tooanahowi next, their youthful heir;
Six other chiefs, so nobly made and tall.

Old Tomochichi's war chief, Hillispilli;
Another chief, the brave young Apahowlske;
Most faithful and best loved of all, Similli.
Fearless and strong, the tall chief, Stimalchi;
So gallant, proudly walked Sinlouchi;
The wilderness had sent its gallant best;
From Florida, Unphichi, and Hingushi,—
Attendants and interpreters the rest.

For fifteen months had Oglethorpe been gone,
From home and friends for duty's sake exiled;
He now returned for emigrants alone,
And England's strength to show the red men wild.
'Twas not a holiday, this visit home;
Though beat his heart with love and pride oppressed.
Through greater dangers yet his days must roam,
Ere from his country's service he earned rest.

The colonists were weeping when he left,
For he a father oft to them had been;
When he was gone from them they seemed bereft,
On him they leaned, for they were feeble men.
And as a shepherd watched o'er his sheep,
O'er them he watched unceasing day and night;
So tenderly he cared they could but weep—
His wondrous strength had made their burdens light.

How strange that voyage to the red men seemed;
The surge of billows and the good ship's flight;
The widening sea's immensities undreamed,
The starry brightness of pervading night.
But never was their silent wonder broken;
They took what happened with stoic's calm;
Were they surprised, complaints remained unspoken;
Were they afraid, not one betrayed a qualm.

The days were seventy on sea. They land
Emotionless upon the Isle of Wight;
A ringing shout of welcome shakes the strand,
To Oglethorpe the scene brought keen delight.
A curious crowd upon the strangers gaze,
The Indians all beheld in one swift glance;
No sights or sounds the visitors amaze,
Through gaping crowds they silently advance.

To Oglethorpe's estate the Indians went to stay,
For he the Trustees and the King must see;
They rest at Westbrook on the river Wey,
A pleasant place, though strange, they all agree.
The Trustees first a special meeting call,
Reports they hear, and farther give command;
A vote of thanks to him is made by all
So well has he accomplished what was planned.

With his exploits are all the papers filled;
Essays and poems laud him to the skies;
By these strange stories are the people thrilled,
"The Christian Hero" wins the offered prize.
The Georgia Office entertains the guests,—
These Indians who have come across the sea;
Their comfort, England's care for them attests—
If far from home they could in comfort be!

Within three coaches by six horses drawn
The Indians to the palace rode in state;
A crowd to watch them gathered there at dawn,
And all along the streets enjoy the fete.

Dressed in their native garments, there they go,
Triangles on their faces painted red;
In moccasins their feet,—a curious show—
The lordly eagles' feathers on the head.

But in the palace, custom makes them change;
Their native garments must be laid aside,
While they the trappings of the great arrange,
More suited for the pale-faced vaunting pride.
The chief and wife don robes of scarlet hue,
With laces rich and furs to them they bring;
Then three in yellow, two in lovely blue,
And thus attired, they go to meet the king.

What thought they of that splendid, royal court,
And what effect upon them had that dazzling scene?
Could they an atom grasp of its import?
What thought they of the courtiers, king and queen?
In that gay world they knew they had no part,
And their proud souls no trappings could enthral;
More dear to them was one true, faithful heart—
One thought of Oglethorpe outweighed them all.

In August died Umphichi Indian chief,
And in an English churchyard was interred;
And Indian burial rites, though strange and brief,
With sympathy the crowd of English stirred.
In Florida, let mourners for him weep;
Palachicllas he will never see;
Within an English churchyard lies asleep
The Indian brave whose vanished soul went free.

Four months in England long they stayed
Her glory and her power to behold,
Presents received with all expenses paid,
Recipients of bounties manifold.
By Lady Dutry they were entertained,
And many more whose names and deeds are lost.
Four thousand pounds in gifts by them were gained,
And many more their entertainments cost.

They went great Windsor Castle next to view,
St. George's Chapel, England's glorious pride;
The public parks, great buildings old and new,
They visited with counselors and guide.
At Eton College saw the students sport,
By their brief visit left from studies free;
In the fine gardens walked at Hampton Court,
While crowds collected this strange race to see.

One day they went in state to see His Grace,
Arch-Bishop of Landreth, of great renown;
Who trembling stood to greet them face to face,
Till Tomochichi begged him to sit down.
By Oglethorpe they were induced to go
Great Britain's strength to learn on land and sea;
That they by observation, too, might know
The glory of her power and dignity.

They left for Georgia after four months' stay;
The king's own coach was sent in which to ride.
A cheering crowd enlivened all the way,
As to the ship they rode in stately pride.
On board the ship—'twas called "The Prince of Wales"—
Then Oglethorpe their friend so just and right,
Took cheerful leave of them. The good ship sails—
England they leave forever at midnight.

Their parts they played upon life's moving screen,
They came and went as they were told to go;
Their little act to see and to be seen,—
Part for a time of England's mammoth show.
Perhaps no deeper thought they gave to things,
Meaning no higher from the events caught;
Perhaps they never knew who pulled the strings
While England for their good so wisely sought.

Wild spread the news their friends had now returned—
The tidings carried to the distant tribes;
By many campfires bright the news was learned
And published as if sent by learned scribes.
Can we imagine with what haste they came,
To hear the tales these wandering natives told?
No ancient Greek more worthy of his fame,
No Trojan, with his fabrication bold.

"What found you on your journey strange and new?—
You who have been to see the good and great?
Tell us who stayed at home your stories true."—
And this was Tomochichi's estimate:
"The white man has been given wisdom, power;
He lacks for nothing—these his needs provide;
The red men have of land a royal dower,
And all things need—all else has been denied."

Within the wilderness 'tis said men met,
And curious circles gathered far and near;
The wondrous tales they heard could they forget?—
For many stories tingled in the ear.
"We did not fear though men and land were strange,"
Said one whose visage grim was sternly set,
"The constant skies and heavens never change;—
And over there the same stars rise and set."

"The streets so hard are paved no grass can grow,"
"The homes so thick no land or country seen;"
"At night the streets and homes with lights all glow—
But in the day no sunlight falls between."
"They neither hunt, no one, nor till the land;
Yet food is piled in houses heaps and heap;"
"A thousand ways they cook and food demand—
With fruits and meats and fish brought from the deep."

"Nobody toils, or hunts, but swiftly come and go."
"They dance all night and curious games they play;"
"They sit for hours and watch some tedious show,"
"They talk and talk and sing and shout and pray."

"The strangest thing I ever saw," said one,
Who spoke with wonder still within his voice,
"Were fruits and water frozen in the sun,—
So cool it made the parching throat rejoice."

"Stop there!" an Indian said in sharp command,
"We have no wish by tales to be deceived;
You tell strange things of people and of land,
And all the wonders told we have believed.
But when you say that feeble men have done
What God Himself in Heaven would never try—
Made water freeze beneath the summer sun,—
Your words are false—and now we know you lie."

The brave stalked from the place in high disdain,
In silence followed other puzzled men,
The meeting broke, none daring to remain,—
They sought their homes and ne'er returned again.
But those who went to England ne'er forgot;
Among themselves they talked it o'er and o'er;
Those wondrous days, recalled, their happy lot,
And Oglethorpe they loved forevermore.

Georgia in Rhyme

1733-1743

Oglethorpe Visits Kasihta

From Massachusetts Governor Belcher sent
An invitation for a visit there;
And Oglethorpe read smiling—he had meant
Soon for that pleasant visit to prepare.—
Think, Oglethorpe, the Spanish War approaches,
The Indians may not always friendly be;
Upon your land a wary foe encroaches;
Not pleasure, only duty you must see.

In secret work the French and Spanish foes,
The Indians from their English friends to win;
But Oglethorpe their deeds of malice knows,
And where the source of mischief would begin.
The Indians to Coweta Town will call
Their nations wide to meet in council grand;
From far they travel, let what may befall,
To set stern laws of what they will demand.

For seven hundred miles the Indians wait,
While seven thousand for the war-path long;
With twenty thousand more whose wavering fate
Depends upon the wisdom of the strong.
Soon Oglethorpe resolves that he would go
A better treaty with them to complete;
And see what terms on them he must bestow
When face to face in high conclave they meet.

'Tis morning calm, before midsummer's heat
Stems boiling down from suns of hot July;
A cutter leaves Savannah north to meet
The cavalcade that waits;—none could deny
The just requests of Oglethorpe who goes
Into the wilderness across a trail
By white men seldom trod, among the foes
Whose horrid deeds fling death on hill and dale.

They wait for him, interpreters and guides.
The horses ready for the journey long;
With Oglethorpe they mount and eastward ride,
Lieutenant Dunbar, Leman, Eyre, so strong
With youth and hope; what danger could they fear
Who follow Oglethorpe on any quest?
No knight of old was half so bold or dear—
They ride where foes more numerous molest.

The first night comes, they camp beneath the stars;
Though not yet tired they feast and fall asleep;
The soft warm earth their bed, no peril mars;
There is no need for them a watch to keep
As friends to faithful savages they go;
No lurking foes by them could be repelled,
Their mission sacred, all are safe they know—
Ambassadors by Indians safely held.

They travel through the thickets, o'er ravines,
Through dreary swamps the horses plunged and mired;
Sometimes the trail led through enchanting scenes,—
But always now both men and beasts were tired.
Two hundred miles silence unmarred remains;
They swam the rivers, waded through the streams;
In torrents they were drenched and by the rains;
'Neath cypress trees lay down to restless dreams.

When forty miles away—where West Point stands—
By Indian chiefs in welcome they were met;
The brave Cusetas, Lords of all the lands,
Whose names in honor linger with us yet;
The second mico was Schisheligo,
But other chiefs and warriors with him ride;
The third chief was the brave Iskegio;
King of Cusetas, too, was there, its pride.

Majestic Chattahoochee marks the trail;
They heard the thunders of Coweta Falls;
The journey ends, they could not miss or fail—
Across the state they heard—Kasihta calls!
Beneath the lordly live-oaks' bending boughs,
More lofty than Savannah ever knew,
A village stands whose beauty might arouse
The envy of the whites,—but these are true.

Like level pavement spreads the even ground;
Neat wigwams dot with white the cooling shade;
The Indian haunts with welcome shouts resound,
For Oglethorpe who meets them unafraid!
Kasihta fair and Oglethorpe the brave!
And here he rests while they all things prepare,—
The foskey, sacred drink by wise men craved,
The Sacred House kept neat with constant care.

The treasures of the town for him are sought;
A feast is made, the best they have to give;
The coolest tent, cold water to him brought,—
And he finds comfort as the Indians live.
Some grateful days in rest he gladly spent,
Then came the time to seek Coweta Town;
Across the Chattahoochee River went
The chiefs, war captains, men of great renown.

Beloved men, and Oglethorpe was one;
Chief of them all he might be justly named;
War captain, too, assert his deeds well done,
All titles great he might have rightly claimed.
Great Oglethorpe among these warriors red
Stood in their sacred councils, grand and tall;
Their sacred drink he took, filled with no dread;
'Mid priests and warriors he was loved by all.

Their sacred pipe he smoked, the calumet;
In many talks each made his wishes known;
And Oglethorpe acknowledged each just debt,
For white encroachment promised to atone.

So just was he, so free from guile, deceit,
Instinctively they read his lofty soul;
His wishes he had only to repeat,
One look, and he could all their votes control.

By their first treaty they would still abide;
Allegiance to the king again they swore;
In wars they would with England justly side
No matter how much France or Spain implore,—
The treaties now completed they return;
The trail seems shorter, travelling towards home;
With hopes fulfilled, their rest more sweetly earned;
The future seems secure where'er they roam.

Five hundred miles o'er land and stream he went,
To meet the Coosas, Tallapoosa, Creeks;
The Indians to Coweta Town had sent
Their noblest braves to grant the boon he seeks.
What Fate pursued him with relentless wings?
Who led him on that dangerous journey straight?—
Perhaps this dream an angel to him brings,—
His journey marked the limit of a state!

But Oglethorpe in fever's anguished pains
At Fort Augusta needs must rest awhile;
His constitution soon its strength regains;—
On to Savannah where the home-lights smile!
'Twas worth the work, the toil, and labor done,
The foes defeated, danger met and braved;—
The red men's friendship had been sought and won,—
The future is secure and Georgia saved!
Sept. 5, 1739.

Oglethorpe and the Spaniards

By Oglethorpe how early it was known
Relationship with Spain was strained and tense!
His energies untiring all were thrown
The weak to strengthen and to build defense.
In England by a sergeant they were drilled
Who early came to make their homes afar;
With military thoughts their minds were filled
That they might be prepared in peace for war.

With the Moravians, advocates of peace,
Came fighting Scotch and settled Darien;
The McIntoshes—may their tribe increase!—
The Dunbars, Bailies,—troops of fearless men.
Of regions then unknown he makes reports;
Explores the coast, surrounding isles he seeks;
And stretches o'er the land a chain of forts,—
These works comprising many busy weeks.

McPherson places o'er Fort Argyle,
Named for the Duke, his kinsman and his friend;
Builds forts upon many a pleasant isle,
With faithful troops ready their aid to lend.
Their military ardor to inflame
A gift of drums was by a neighbor sent;
From England when the gentle Wesleys came
Were brought some guns and other armament.

Among the first surveyors, Ellis, Jones,
Did faithful work throughout the alien lands;
Then Tolme, Austin worked among the stones
With chains and compass, or on yielding sands.
'Twas idle play to what those later found,
Appointed through the swamps to work, and fen;
But soon success their arduous labors crowned,
Who made the famous road to Darien.

The only home in Georgia that he claimed
Was in the town built for the state's defense;
Its streets were for his officers all named;
It had two gates, and shade trees thick and dense.
Fair Frederica! Here his home was made;
His modest cottage caught and held the view,—
A prison built of brick, the barricade,
And nearby orange groves in fragrance grew.

Plantations of devoted friends were near;
Of Mr. Hawkins, Raymond Demere;
Desbrissays, Richards—others, too, as dear,
Who mixed with busy days some hours of play.
But he perpetual vigil ever kept;
In toil his only relaxation found;
His faculties alert while others slept,
His plans unceasing, judgment just and sound.

When horrid war could be no more delayed,
To Oglethorpe instructions had been given
That he the Spaniards' strongholds should invade
Ere he from his own shores in ruin be driven.
Negotiations had been false and vain;
A promise from the foe but lightly held;
Ambassadors who went came not again,
Plot after plot with difficulty quelled.

To Carolina quickly then he went,
The journey of six days he made with speed;
Four hundred troops to aid they gave and sent,
Provisions promised for their soldiers' need.
To England oft he went with heavy cost,
Through years for troops, for cannon, and for men;
The letters sent the Trustees oft were lost,
Though written by the general's own pen.

Such constant cares at last demanded toll;
His body by fatigue and care was worn;
Grave doubts at last assailed his faithful soul;
His busy thoughts with mental anguish torn.
When came the time for war he must prepare,—
Conflicts approaching must be met with Spain,—
For once his failing spirits felt despair,—
He knew how little help he could obtain.

"Here, take this ring; you'll never see me more,"
He said to Wesley, "and my wishes learn.
The trials of my life will soon be o'er;
Soon I must go, but I shall not return."
"I'll keep the ring; as you have said I'll do,"
Kind Wesley promised. "But you will not fail;
When you return I'll give it back to you,
For God fights, too, when you his foes assail."

"Then bring my swords," he said, "and let me see
The tempered beauty of each trusty blade;
For I must choose the best to take with me;
By each a faithful record has been made."
"My father's sword," he said, "I'll not forsake,
Its tempered steel with all my needs accord."
"And better still," said Wesley, "with you take
One more—the sword of Gideon and the Lord."

'Twas spring when they attacked St. Augustine,
With cannon weak against the fortress strong;
A reckless waste by Oglethorpe 'twas seen;
This useless siege continued five weeks long.
To Georgia he returned in failing health;
But not to rest upon a bed of ease;
The foe his state invaded soon by stealth
And nothing would their cruelty appease.

But Oglethorpe had learned the art of war;
Though fiercely they attacked by land and sea,
By brave defenders they were driven far;
Their absence short; they would not turn and flee.
The summer came and brought them back again;
They took the land and many buildings burned;
At Bloody Marsh of England's might they learned,—
Five thousand yielded to eight hundred men.

The Spaniards left to bring their threats no more,
And Georgia from their power at last was free;
The arduous work of Oglethorpe was o'er,
And home he went across the distant sea—
Stirred by these thrilling tales retold,
Of what our fathers by their valor won,
Oh, children! stand the test of life. Be bold;
And do as well as they for us have done!

Aug. 10, 1742.

Oglethorpe and Savannah

Savannah's early laws were pure and just;
No taverns there could any credit give,
No slaves, no rum to drag men to the dust,
No one in idleness or debt could live.
No lawyers there a losing cause to plead;
No courts were there, no lawsuits and no jail—
Too late men heed their duty to succeed,
But evils seek that crush and make them fail.

These names are stamped on Georgia without blot:
John Grady, William Cooksey, Mr. Gaure,
George Sims, the Clyatts, Parkers, Francis Scott,
The Upsons, Richard Hodges, Francis Moore,
James Gould, the Christies, Captain Hamer, Bland,
John Sharp, the Ligons, Gilberts, and Baillou,
John Lawrence, Rogers, Rigdon, Fox, Myhand,
And Horton,—who a cotton crop first grew.

The work they did upon our forest state,—
The site of forty acres wild to clear—
The toil required no one can estimate;—
It took the toll of twenty men one year.
Their life at home in busy toil was spent;
The father from the Bible read each day;
Together they sang hymns in sweet content;
Young people often danced in pleasure gay.

The mother taught her daughters household arts,
To knit, to sew, to weave, and food prepared;
The father and the sons performed their parts,—
They hunted, fished, their toil and pleasures shared.
The Indians then no early troubles made;
They went to church and were not hostile foes;
With food or labor furnished help and aid,
And like good neighbors sought to lighten woes.

A little world within the wilderness,
From values false and vaunting pride set free;
Where men with fewer wants to cause distress,
In honest toil might live and happy be.
And to this distant world not only came
The honest poor who needs must toil and pray,
But youthful aspirants to wealth and fame,—
The Wesleys, Whitefield, Delamotte and Way.

When Oglethorpe to England last had gone,
Savannah fair, the mother of the State,
A village for four hundred homes was known,
But Georgia lives to call her justly great.
Savannah was his joy and pride of heart,
He saw it stand an infant on the bluff;
Then run in leaps from that first feeble start,—
Its early home was scarcely large enough.

Though envious men accused, and mutineers
On Oglethorpe their blows and bullets rained,
He lives in history through the lengthening years,
His character and blameless life unstained.
With storms the morning of his life was filled;
With noble strife and Christian deeds the noon;
But evening came when earthly cares were stilled
Beneath the radiance of the harvest moon.

Savannah, once the pride of kings, endowed
By them with royal gifts, an English maid,
Who, on a foreign shore grew rich and proud,
But never in the changing years afraid;
Now fully grown she sits beside the sea,
The Nations visit her, with flags unfurled,
And she, with native courtesy,—and free,—
Her gifts sends forth to all the waiting world.

The dreams of Oglethorpe all true have come;
Upon the South no enemies annoy;
In Georgia now there are no slaves, no rum,
On East, or West, or North naught would destroy;
The object of the colony had failed?—
Trustees resigned, and no more good could do?—
Two hundred years, a hero he is hailed,—
The ideals of his life are still found true!

Feb. 12, 1933.

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